

Magazine an asset for busy execs

To function effectively, executives need to absorb vast amounts of information about the business world. One way to do this is to subscribe to a digest called Boardroom Reports.

This twice-monthly magazine is a compendium of business extracts and interviews that touches on almost every topic executives typically face. It is crammed with 16 pages of condensed information, with no advertising.

The entries, which vary from one paragraph to a maximum of two pages, are culled from other business publications or are the result of the editors' interviews with noted experts. Every entry is annotated to encourage followup research or direct contact with the author.

The masthead reveals much of the tone of Boardroom Reports. Within the fine print the reader is admonished to consider ideas outside one's normal realm, never to read too quickly, and to always study Boardroom Reports with pencil in hand.



Hillel Segal

Software for the Powerful Executive," "Trading with the USSR," "Don't Worry About Inflation, Worry About the Fed," and "Peter Drucker Tells How to Do Much, Much More in the Years Ahead."

Here are several tidbits I found interesting:

■ "Good leaders know how to replace themselves and don't avoid doing it. It has always been difficult to select future managers, but today it's especially hard because of the unprecedented turbulence in the business world. To enhance the company's chances of

Each article — as well as the listings in the table of contents — obligingly begins with a square bullet to check for future reference.

The last two issues featured stories such as "Powerful

continuing under capable leadership, avoid grooming leaders in your image.

"Opportunity: The qualifications for management success in the future may not be critical to success today. Key traits of tomorrow's top leaders: Boundless flexibility, receptiveness to change, ability to take intelligent risks. These skills will be needed much more in the future than they have been until now. . . ."

■ "Customer service mistake: Failing to realize that customer service is aimed at future sales, not recently completed ones. Example: Customers forced to wait too long at a check-out counter will buy the first time, but probably not the second. Quick check-out service, on the other hand, lets customers know management is interested in convenience, and that makes an impression next time around. . . ."

More good questions, all answered in just the last two issues:

How many points should a good speech include, and what length to

keep audience attention? Answer: five points, 20 minutes.

The best time for telemarketing to consumers? Between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

Are 15-second commercials worth it? They had only one-quarter to one-third the viewer recall rate of 30-second spots.

On the downside, Boardroom Reports is not for everyone. It promotes a generalist point of view. But if you're receptive to new ideas, you'll love it.

■ The bottom line: I'll admit I'm biased, having served for several years on the Boardroom Reports "Panel of Experts." But that was many years ago, and I still think it's the best business publication available for executives today. To obtain a subscription, contact Boardroom Reports, 330 W. 42nd St., New York, N.Y.

Hillel Segal's weekly column evaluates gadgets, small-computer hardware and software, seminars and books designed to enhance business productivity.